

# *The Brooklyn Jewish Center Review*

*March, 1945*

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NEWS OF THE MONTH



**Victims of  
Cold Pogrom**

These victims, and a million and a half like them, must depend on the Joint Distribution Committee—a beneficiary of the United Jewish Appeal of Greater New York—for rescue and relief.

**TO MEMBERS OF THE BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER**

A committee has been formed to conduct this year's Center campaign for the United Jewish Appeal. It is our sacred duty to raise our proportionate share of the \$75,000,000.00 the Jews of this country are expected to contribute to rescue the surviving million and one-half Jews in Europe.

I know that the members of our institution will do their full share in this life-saving work. The campaign will open with a dinner at the Center on Thursday evening, April 12th. I urge you to reserve the evening and make certain that nothing will interfere with your attending the United Jewish Appeal Dinner.

EMANUEL GREENBERG,  
President



# BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER REVIEW

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## JEWISH REPRESENTATION AT THE SAN FRANCISCO CONFERENCE

WHILE the pattern of the new world which is being fashioned by Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin is slowly beginning to emerge from the secrecy which enwraps their conferences, the mechanics by which this pattern is being achieved are still virtually unknown. One thing, however, may be surmised, and that is that there will, in all probability, be no repetition of the Versailles Peace Conference. There will not be one continued and continuous session of debate, negotiation and decision. A series of conferences, lasting possibly over a period of years and subject to revision from time to time as events dictate, will ultimately reconstitute the world. In the political sphere there will occur something analogous to the series of conferences which began at Casablanca and which have, so far, included Teheran and Yalta.

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On April 25th, 1945, the first of these partial peace conferences will be held at San Francisco. Under the sponsorship of the United States, England, Russia and China, all the nations which have so far declared war on Germany or Japan will meet to begin laying the foundations for, and drawing the outlines of, the brave new world which is to be created from the chaos and ruin of the present war. The list of invitees to the Conference is notable. It runs the whole national alphabet, from Abyssinia to Uruguay, and in this sense, and because of its inclusiveness, is an augury for good. But that same list is notable for an omission which portends an ill future for the particular uninvited guest. We would like to believe that a seating list at the table of conferring peoples, summoned on a plane of equality for the good of all, has omit-

ted the Jewish people only by accident. That, however, it is foolish to believe; for there are no accidents in the protocol of the State Department.

Why this omission? Certainly it cannot be argued that the Jewish people have no stake in the deliberations and decisions of the conference. It is impossible to think of any people having a greater interest in the final outcome of this and later conferences. True enough, every nation in Europe has a bill of complaint against Germany, and all peoples in Asia have the same grievance against Japan. The Jewish people, however, have admittedly a greater and a more poignant complaint. They were the first enemies of Hitlerism and they have been, in a terrible and torturous fashion, the most afflicted of its victims. In any court of equity the measure of relief is the extent and the verity of the complaint. And no court which assumes to dispense justice under the guidance of principle, measures the rights of a litigant to enter its halls only by the dictates of expediency.

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It may perhaps be urged that there is no need for a special representation of the Jews at the San Francisco Conference because they will form integral parts of peoples adequately represented there. The Jews of Poland, it will be said, are part of the Polish nation and, standing on a par with their Polish compatriots, cannot reasonably ask and, therefore, cannot reasonably expect, a special status. This is perhaps true as a matter of cold, international logic. It certainly is not true as a matter of Polish history and as a picture of the relations between Jewish and non-Jewish Poles. The same is true with respect to Rumania, Bulgaria, Hun-

gary and other nations in which previous guarantees of Jewish rights have been no more than words on a piece of paper, easily erased by the actions of governments and the animus of people.

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Versailles, for instance, guaranteed to the Jews, in the Constitution of the Polish Republic, a complete set of rights which, if observed, would have made the lot of the Jews of Poland completely normal. The history of that guarantee, however, is but the record of another paper promise. San Francisco, and the conferences which are to follow, must find some more durable solution for the European Jewish question. It must deal not only with the matter of retribution to the Germans and formal restitution to the Jews. It must, indeed, recognize the fact that European anti-Semitism, which antedates Hitlerism, has always been one of the chief causes for the misery of Europe by virtue of the fact that it has been one of the most useful expedients in the hands of would-be conquerors and dictators.

One special reason exists for Jewish participation in the Conferences. Out of Dumbarton Oaks, San Francisco and later conferences will come some organic international body which will replace the League of Nations. It will take over the rights and the obligations of the League. One of the chief obligations of the League was the supervision of the British Mandate over Palestine. As a matter of factual history, Britain has administered this Mandate for its own benefit and as though Palestine were a crown colony. The new League must put a stop to this breach of fiduciary obligation and must prepare a system under which a recurrence of British breach of trust will be made impossible. Zionists insist that this can be done only through the formation in Palestine of a Jewish National Com-

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# "JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES"

"בינינו לבין עצמנו"

## An Intimate Chat Between Rabbi and Reader

### Disappointing Words from Roosevelt and Churchill

**N**EARLY every one of us who heard or who read the addresses delivered by Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt, in which they gave their reports of the Yalta Conference, felt a keen sense of disappointment at the scant reference to the future status of Jewish Palestine. In common with the liberty-loving people throughout the world we were, of course, happy that the "Big Three" met and planned not only for the necessary military operations to win the war, but also for those essential tasks which will make possible an enduring peace. And we were proud, as well as happy, to read and to hear the detailed reports outlining the various steps agreed upon, the various problems which were solved—all with the one aim in view, to build a world upon the foundations of justice and equality.

We therefore had a right to assume that the future status of Palestine, as it relates to the Jewish people, would be definitely decided upon at this Conference. For surely, both Churchill and Roosevelt know that the Jew was the

first and, comparatively speaking, the greatest sufferer of the Hitler brutality. They know, too, the present plight of the Jew and that most of the Jews, not only in the Nazi-ruled lands but also in many of the liberated countries of Europe, look to Palestine as their only hope and salvation. They know, too, that world justice will not and cannot be achieved unless justice is done to the Jew.

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All this made our disappointment the greater when Churchill told us that the Palestine settlement was postponed till after the war is won, and our own President, in a side remark which was not even included in the prepared text of the address, simply told us that he learned more of the Jewish problem and the Arab problem in five minutes conversation with Ibn Saud than he could have learned in many written communications.

There was further justification for our painful reaction to these brief notices of one of the most pressing demands of world Jewry in the fact that many hints were offered through high circles that

monwealth. But whether this is to be the ultimate fruit of the Balfour Declaration or whether the yield and harvest of that seed is to be lesser in measure: whether we are to have a Commonwealth or an international trusteeship or a specific mandate either to Great Britain or a substitute trustee: whatever the result may be, certainly it is but elementary justice that the Jews, as the parties most nearly concerned, shall have an opportunity, through their own spokesmen, to present their case. And to present it not later on and not towards the fag end of the series and not after determinations have crystallized and not when minds of statesmen have become inelastic. No, this opportunity must be furnished from the very beginning of the conferences, when the spirit of the conferees is fresh and the mold and matrix of their deliberations is being created.

It is a maxim of equity that justice delayed is justice denied. Jews fear that their exclusion from San Francisco will mean, first, the delaying, and, ultimately, the denying of justice to those who need it so badly. By all of the processes of diplomacy, therefore, and at the same time without any yielding to the niceties and refinements of protocol, Jews must insist upon and arrange for the representation of the Jewish people at San Francisco.

— WILLIAM I. SIEGEL

### Festival of Liberation

**P**ASSOVER is the greatest Jewish national holiday, because for over two thousand years it has been the festival of liberation. Throughout history, Jews derived from the epic of the Exodus and

[Continued on page 22]

this matter would receive very favorable consideration at Yalta. The additional fact that the platforms both major political parties in our country pledged themselves to work for the realization of a Jewish Commonwealth in Palestine gave us the right to hope that Yalta would offer the great opportunity for America's leader to achieve that goal.

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And yet, though we cannot deny the shock of our reaction, I for one refuse to lose faith in the justice that must be done to the Jew with regard to Palestine. I believe that Dr. Weizmann has a keener understanding of world events, when he said in Jerusalem—after these addresses were published—that these reports should not lead us into over-pessimism, just as we should ever guard ourselves against being led into over-optimism. That, indeed, is one of our great ailments. We are extremists both in our optimism and in our pessimism. Weizmann has not lost his faith either in Britain or in America. He still feels that when the time is ripe the Jewish right to Palestine will be recognized. And we, too, dare not lose that faith. There may be what diplomats term *Real-Politik*, which prevented the further disclosure of decisions reached. Perhaps the San Francisco meeting will present a better opportunity to right an unintentional slight to Jewish feelings in this vital matter. But above all, we dare not permit the feeling of pessimism to overtake us. On the contrary, these events ought to rouse us to a greater effort in behalf of our sacred ideal. We must unite now, as never before, to press our just demands to further enlighten public opinion, to win the support of our non-Jewish citizens, and in every way to keep the cause of Jewish Palestine before the conscience of America and Britain.

The greatest danger to Zionism today would be a confession of defeat on our part. Let us guard ourselves against such spirit of defeatism. Not over-pessimism nor over-optimism, but a steady, constant determination to achieve our goal, is the need in this most critical period in Jewish life.

*Israel H. Leventhal*



THE recent conversion to Catholicism of the Chief Rabbi of Rome is the sort of thing possible only in this crazy and twisted world we live in.

It is this writer's opinion that the Jewish press played up Zolli's apostasy out of all due proportion to its true importance. Too great prominence was given to a simple act of treason.

The next thing we may be led to imagine is the Grand Rabbi's spiritual struggle, his physical pain, his mental conflict, years spent in dismal, tormenting brooding when, like Paul on the road to Damascus, his soul was torn to shreds by religious doubts and uncertainties, wavering between the cross and the Torah; then, in a sudden illumination, hesitation faded, and indecision and irresolution disappeared like the morning clouds before the mounting sun. The musing, pondering, meditating rabbi had groped his way out of the darkness, divested himself of his sacerdotal robes and donned the cassock.

The facts, however, as told by men who knew Dr. Zolli over a period of years, reveal a character which might better be left to the psychoanalyst. According to these reports, he was a queer figure, a strange personality, full of incongruities and contradictions, at once cold and mystical, liberal and fanatic; a godly man, yet not without personal ambition, loving his people and bemoaning their lot, yet deserting them and leaving them to their fate at the first opportunity when his own safety was in danger. He preached impassioned sermons in the synagogue, but coveted Gentile company in his private life, preferably high church dignitaries who might further his ambition and gain him popularity in the society he courted. He was furiously opposed to assimilation and spoke with flaming orthodox zeal against it, yet he himself married a Christian woman after his Jewish wife died.

He was not the kind of pastor to gain the love and devotion of his flock. Indeed, he was cold and aloof, distant and remote from his people. They respected his learning and eloquence, but they did not really love him. He became the center of a conflict in his community, and no sooner was Rome liberated and the Jews were free to speak their mind on the quality of the spiritual leadership

they wanted, than they had no hesitation in rising against him. The controversy became so acrimonious that the head of the military government of Rome had to be called in to settle it.

His last bond of affection with his people, if there ever was any, was severed when, during the German occupation of Rome, instead of remaining with his congregation and sharing its fate, as devoted Jewish leaders did everywhere, he went into hiding among Gentiles and did not emerge until the danger was past. He gave as an excuse the rabbi of Genoa who was cruelly beaten and tormented by the Nazis. He was a sorry example of a rabbi whose forebears were the first to die for their faith and people.

His scholarship, of which much display was made in the press releases, is more mythical than authentic. At any rate, this writer does not remember a single striking learned contribution bearing his name. He taught Hebrew and Semitic languages at the University of Padua and subsequently in Rome. But this only proves how low Jewish scholarship has fallen in Italy since the days of Samuel David Luzatto and Zebi Perez Chajes, his memorable predecessor in Trieste, to say nothing of the still earlier scholars. He contributed some essays to semi-learned publications and is credited with a brochure on Ahad Ha'am, but what rabbi with leisure on his hands has not been guilty of such things at one time or another?

In brief, there is nothing in the desertion of the former rabbi of Rome to cause the commotion it aroused. If not motivated by sordid reasons, it is one more illustration of the strange, warped mentality the war has created. When whole nations fall from the high pedestal of their professed morality and idealism, why quibble and scrutinize the scruples and motives of one individual?

What is difficult to forgive, is the affront of Zolli's conversion to his people. He has shamed the Jews at a time they are least able to bear it; he has hurt their pride, aggravated their grief, heaped humiliation upon heads already bowed low

By JACOB S. MINKIN

with much suffering, and given their enemies an opportunity to mock and taunt them. No matter what his motives may have been, an officer in high command, as is the position of a rabbi with respect to his congregation, does not desert his company howsoever the campaign goes against it. What is treason in the case of a private soldier is still more inexcusable when the culprit is in a position to lead and command.

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Unfortunately, Zolli is not the only man to run away from the field when the battle was going against him. It would be strange indeed if a record four thousand years old did not contain examples of men too weak and fickle to stand up under pressure. It is rather surprising, and it is eloquent testimony to the moral and spiritual stamina of the Jews, that, considering the universal exertion to break down their morale, Graetz is able to account for only less than seventy notable departures from the faith.

In pagan and Christian lands, under the cross and the crescent, and in times before either existed, the attempt was made, by devious ways and means, to woo and win the Jew from the religion of his fathers. Almost all the world joined in the noisy propaganda, as if neither paganism nor Islam nor Christianity nor any other system of belief devised by the human mind could exist so long as Judaism survived. When neither flattery nor verbal coaxing sufficed, the more convincing arguments of physical force were adopted. The faint-hearted succumbed—succumbed to suffer a life of unending pain, remorse and spiritual agony. But the strong and the stubborn rejected every bargain for their souls, although the crown of martyrdom was the only reward for their loyalty.

Although Jews ambitious for position and power had coquetted with the Greeks and Romans, and we read of priests who forsook the Temple and adopted the pa-

gan rites, apostasy, properly speaking, cannot be said to have begun until Christianity began progressing toward a world religion. It was only then, after the Church had established itself as a missionary religion with all the world for its parish, that the proselytizing propaganda began. There were Jews who, attracted by Hellenic culture on the one hand and Roman pomp and power on the other—the enigmatic Elisha ben Abuyah, teacher of Rabbi Meir, and Tiberius Julius Alexander, Philo's nephew, were among these—leaped over the fence of the Law before the advent of Christianity. But they were not religious apostates in the sense in which the term is understood in Judaism. They were not converts to the religions of either Greece or Rome, because neither of these two pagan faiths had any such systematized and elaborate conversion rites and ceremonies as were afterwards practised in the Christian Church. Their vice consisted in political, national and cultural desertion rather than in religious apostasy. In other words, to employ Hebrew terms for this form of departure from the normal Jewish way of life, they might be described as *Minim*, or *Apikorsim*—sceptics, heretics or infidels, but not as *Mesummadim*, which is the rabbinic reproach for complete and total abandonment of Judaism.

While Christianity preached and encouraged apostasy from Judaism almost from the very moment she gained power, honored and lavished her favors upon those who consented to accept her, and severely penalized those who refused, it was not until the eleventh and twelfth centuries, or the period synonymous with the Crusades, that the full force of her religious zeal fell upon the Jews. The unfortunate victims were given no choice; death by the most cruel tortures was their only alternative. Many had allowed themselves to be baptized while secretly remaining loyal to their religion. It was a forced conversion, and the Jewish authorities compassionately recognized the sham and dealt mercifully with them, treating them with every show of kindness and consideration. Thus, when a son of the Great Rabbi Gershom of Mayence died after he had been converted to Christianity, his father performed all the rites of mourning as if he had not apostatized.

Spain was the classical land of Jewish

suffering. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries she repeated a thousand-fold the cruel example practised in her sister-countries across the Pyrenees. Fanatic priests and flagellant monks touched off a persecution which, like a raging torrent, swept over the Jewish habitations of Castile and Aragon, with the result that when it was over 50,000 Jews had lost their lives and at least twice as many joined the Church. With tragic monotony, the same dismal tale was repeated again. While officially Christian, privately they remained loyal to their old religion, thus giving birth to that tragic group of Marranos who not many years later were destined for the fires of the Inquisition.

But not all who had been baptised belonged to the category of unwilling Christians. Some, indeed, had tasted of the power and glory and the advantages

of the Church, and it seemed good in their eyes. They were ambitious men, extravagant and lustful, hankering after power, itching for social position, with an eye to the material things of life, and where could they realize these things if not in the Church, which controlled so much and dominated so many?

One of the gloomiest chapters in Jewish history is the career of these debased and depraved individuals who, in their desire for wealth and power, had often turned against their former brethren, denounced and persecuted them and heaped humiliation and suffering upon them. Their story, too, belongs to the province of psychoanalysis. They were, on the whole, unhappy and bitterly disappointed men, these spiritual acrobats who were never quite sure of their balance. Their position was both tragic and ironic, for, while they were despised and mocked by

## TWO FIRST-HAND REPORTS ON ZOLLI

*Here are two first-hand reports on Zolli. One is from an old acquaintance, the other from an American newspaper man, son of Brooklyn Jewish Center members. His observations are taken from a letter to his parents.*

By CHAIM BLOCK

I HAVE KNOWN Dr. Zolli for thirty years, and I can speak with authority about him. His former name was Zahler, and not Zahlner, as some assert. He was born in Brody, Galicia, and is related to the late Professor Zewi Chayes, former Chief Rabbi of Vienna. In his youth he studied under the tutelage of the late Rabbi Chayes, Chief Rabbi of Brody, and was ordained by him.

His wife is not a convert, but a Jewess and a descendant of a prominent Jewish family. There may be a possibility that he remarried, and his present wife may be a Christian by birth. I, personally, am unaware of it.

From 1918 to 1936, Dr. Zahler was Chief Rabbi of Trieste. He succeeded Dr. Chayes, whose assistant he was prior to his teacher's departure for Vienna. As a matter of fact, it was Dr. Chayes who recommended Dr. Zolli as his successor. I am confident that Dr. Chayes considered him worthy to occupy the post,

otherwise he would have hesitated to recommend him. Dr. Zolli was both a nationalist and an ardent Zionist.

I visited Dr. Zolli a number of times and saw him in Vienna when he came to Dr. Chayes' funeral. While spiritual leader in Trieste, he openly preached Zionism and bitterly attacked the assimilationists and the anti-Zionists.

His latest act was, indeed, a great shock to me. I can give no explanation for his action except that he may have lost his mind.

It is worth noting another similar case. The son of Rabbi Casteloni, of Trieste, also accepted Christianity. He amassed a great fortune, but later died in poverty.

By LEO J. MARGOLIN

*Formerly on PM, now in Government service in Italy.*

PLEASE tell your friends at the Center not to be too concerned with the conversion to Catholicism of Zolli, former Chief Rabbi of Rome. I met and interviewed the man on several occasions. He was a great scholar, but the years of poking about books seemed to confuse him. During the interviews his daughter seemed to answer most of the questions. His thinking was roundabout. Never did he give me a straight answer.



their former brethren, they were not infrequently loathed and despised by the very men whose company they coveted. Uncomfortable in their new position, they attempted to gratify their wounded pride by plaguing and harassing their erstwhile co-religionists. Because of the knowledge of Jewish literature which some of these apostates possessed, it was not difficult for them to discover its weak points and make them the subject of attack.

An apostate of this type, hungry for power and greedy for the material rewards his humble community could not satisfy, was Abner of Burgos (1270–1346), who used his considerable biblical and talmudic learning to oppress and embarrass his people. As sacristan of a wealthy church in Valladolid, Spain, he was richly rewarded for the faith he betrayed, but something of the apostate's pricking conscience seems to have remained with him, for all through his life he never ceased advancing the most ridiculous reasons for the abandonment of the faith of his fathers.

The fourteenth century was the most critical for the Jews in Spain. It was the period which sealed their fate, foreshadowed their doom, and prepared for that great exodus which became known as the expulsion of the Jews from the Iberian peninsula. While many factors were involved and many hands and brains had spun the web of that tragedy, no little of the Jews' suffering came from a former rabbi, Solomon Levi of Burgos (1351–1435), who, although punctilious in the details of his religion, an expert in talmudic learning, and a pillar of the faith, was vain and ambitious, shrewd and calculating, longing for a life of wealth and splendor. He not only became a priest; his ambition was set for a higher goal. He would be bishop, cardinal—and why not, one day, pope? He was shrewd, he was learned, he was eloquent, he possessed many of the qualities suitable for the highest office. Moreover, he let it be known that he was not an ordinary Jew professing the faith of Jesus, but was of the tribe of Levi, the very tribe that gave birth to Mary, the mother of Jesus. He was overwhelmed with honors, rose to high ecclesiastical position and was appointed privy councillor of King Henry of Castile.

His apostasy, like that of his modern

counterpart, aroused the deepest consternation among the Jews. What effect would it have upon the wavering multitude of Jews? To what use would he put his knowledge, his intimate acquaintance with Jews and Judaism? Their past experiences were enough to make them anxious and fearful. And well they might be, for as Paul de Santa Maria, Rabbi Solomon Levi slandered his former religion, was cruel to his people and used his exalted office for whatever repressive measures his distorted mind could devise against them.

His pupil, Joshua Lorki, was among his severest critics, but afterwards he succumbed to his blandishments, and he too became a source of annoyance and irritation to his former brethren. More than that, as Geronimo de Santa Fe, in order to discredit the Jews and hasten their conversion, he made himself responsible for one of the most sensational debates between Jewish and Christian ecclesiastical authorities. This was the famous disputation at Tortosa (1413–1414), attended by almost all the notables of the Christian Church. In the end, the discussion proved inconclusive, and the Jewish delegates were dismissed unharmed. But the apostate rabbi won his point, for the study of the Talmud was prohibited, and whatever copies could be laid hands on were confiscated. Too, a series of curbs and restrictions which rendered life for Jews well-nigh unbearable were imposed.

In the course of time, zeal for the conversion of the Jews died down considerably, and apostates no longer stood in the high esteem of the Church. But it was left to a renegade Jew of the sixteenth century, Johannes Pfefferkorn (1469–1521), a thoroughly vile and worthless creature, to raise a controversy concerning the Jews which unwittingly caused the last shadows of the Middle Ages to fall and ushered in the Reformation. It was a burglary that brought this scum of German Jews into prominence, an offense he attempted to wash away with baptismal water. He more than succeeded, for soon he became the center of a company of heresy-hunting monks who used him to ferret out anti-Christian "blasphemies" in Jewish books, especially the Talmud, so that they might be confiscated and burned. To and fro the battle swayed for many a year, with arguments,

accusations and imprecations on both sides. Ignorant and illiterate himself, vicious and libelous pamphlets appeared in Pfefferkorn's name. In the end, John Reuchlin, the pride of Germany, whose character, learning and position were respected everywhere, was appointed umpire. And, indeed, it proved an appointment which, in less than a decade, raised a storm which shook the foundations of the trumped-up charges against the Jews. He studied Hebrew, he became an expert in Jewish literature, he came to love it for its beauty, depth and "divine character," and the opinion he rendered was as striking as it was novel for his time and environment. He not only exonerated the Talmud of its alleged blasphemies, and the Jews of the attack of heresy, but was the first to stammer words of Jewish rights and privileges of equality which, after more than four hundred years, are still a mirage in the land in which they were spoken.

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It is a gloomy and depressing picture these men create, these apostates who, to appease an accusing conscience, turned against their people and hounded and harmed them in every way. A Jewish scholar compiled a list of eighty such Jewish converts who vented their spleen against their former comrades in faith. One and all, they were tragic figures, pathetic failures, knowing full well, in the bitterness and emptiness of their soul, that there was something in the Jewish quality of their make-up which could not be destroyed or bartered away for something in which neither religiously nor psychologically they could strike roots. They embezzled their heaven, with no other paradise to offer them spiritual peace and tranquillity. Such hopelessly soured and exasperated individuals were the two famous German Jewish converts to Christianity, Ludwig Boerne and Heinrich Heine, the latter of whom had spent a life of pain and remorse, and did everything to atone for the wrong he had inflicted upon himself.

One meets a somewhat brighter picture of apostasy from Judaism among the Jewish converts in Russia. Bred in the Jewish tradition, most of them noted scholars and earnestly devoted to their people, they deserted them because of the lucrative positions they could not attain

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*The Yiddish press is currently celebrating its 75th anniversary. On March 1, 1870, the Yiddische Zeitung, a weekly, was founded by J. K. Buchler. The enterprise was suggested by Horace Greeley, who thought it might further his Presidential aspirations. It continued publication, though irregularly, for seven years. In September of 1870, another Yiddish weekly, the Post, was established by Zwi Hirsh Bernstein, uncle of the noted journalist and editor, Herman Bernstein. It lasted only six months, merging with the Hebrew News, printed in Yiddish, Hebrew, German and English. It, too, succumbed in a short time.*

—The Editors

**O**F the many and varied institutions which the Jews have succeeded in establishing in this country, none has more truly reflected the life and the temper, the spirit and the aspirations of the Jewish masses than did the Yiddish press during its long and exciting career. This career began approximately seventy-five years ago, and its anniversary, though occurring in the midst of a world war and at a time when an unprecedented calamity has overtaken the Jewish people, should not be passed over without a proper appraisal and a word of appreciation of the historic role it played in shaping the life of American Jewry.

The Yiddish press is, of course, an immigrant institution. The very first group of Eastern European Jewish immigrants in the early seventies of the last century made several attempts to establish some sort of a press, and it is no mere accident that the *Tageblatt*, the first Yiddish daily, came into being in 1885, four years after the outbreak of pogroms in Russia, which increased the number of Jewish immigrants from that country five-fold. Then, at almost equal intervals, new dailies were added. The *Herold* appeared in 1891; the *Forward*, in 1897; the *Morgen Journal*, in 1902; the *Warheit*, in 1905 and, finally, the *Tag* in 1914. It might easily be shown that, on the average, each increase of 100,000 to 150,000 newcomers from Eastern Europe created an opportunity for a new Yiddish daily to be born.

## THE YIDDISH PRESS IS 75 YEARS OLD

By HARRY SACKLER

Still, and paradoxical as it may seem, the Yiddish newspaper was a purely American product. During the second half of the nineteenth century, Jewish periodical literature had made but a timid start in Central and Eastern Europe. In the main, these were Hebrew monthlies or weeklies, given to literature, Bible exegesis and the discussion of abstruse problems. The two great Hebrew dailies, *Hamelitz* and *Hazefirah*, first made their appearance in the same decade that the *Tageblatt* began to appear in New York. In other words, the Jewish immigrant, hailing from Eastern Europe, was not the newspaper-reading kind. Being, in the main, a small-town dweller, he hardly had any opportunity to satisfy his need for it. News of world events reached him somewhat late, either through a casual visitor from the "wide world" or through the exceptional neighbor who subscribed to a German or Russian newspaper. Upon his arrival in America, however, he found, to his delight, a newspaper within reach. And he took to it avidly, for two reasons: one arising out of his disposition, the second arising out of his new circumstances.

By disposition, the Jew was always deeply concerned with world events. The world, almost all of it, was the habitat of his kin, and he wanted to know how they were faring. The coming of an emissary from Palestine, who had seen the Wailing Wall with his own eyes, was an event which small-town Jews spoke of for years on end. Somebody returning from distant and wonderful America—"where the trains run on the roofs"—was the center of attraction for young and old, for the great and the lowly. And now the newcomer held in his hand a printed sheet that told him all the news and almost as soon as it happened. That was a remarkable feat to admire, to appreciate and to take full advantage of.

The second reason, that of his new circumstances, was even more compelling. The transition from the small-town environment to the larger centers of American commerce and industry was essentially a violent wrench to the average immigrant. It was not merely a shift of

approximately five thousand miles in space; it was also a jolt in time—probably a full century as far as tempo and habits of living were concerned. Relatives, townsmen and friends tried, of course, to ease this impact of the timid and confused newcomer of the dynamic and overwhelming American environment. But the major contribution to this process of adjustment came from the Yiddish press. From its columns, generally written in the simplest Yiddish, the immigrant learned a great deal of what America stood for, what it expected of him and what he could expect in return. It was all so reassuring, and put one ultimately at his ease.

This instruction was only intermittently formal; that is, written with a view to familiarize the immigrant with American institutions and way of life. The bulk of it—and by far the most effective part—came as a mere by-product, arising from the daily concerns of a newspaper. There was the news, the feature article, the editorial comment. And while special emphasis was put on anything with a Jewish angle, the atmosphere in which all things transpired was essentially American. After a while, the contours of the new country and of the new life began to emerge, to grow clear, to make sense. In the course of one presidential election, the alert immigrant, reading his Yiddish paper regularly and carefully, learned more about the ways of democracy than he might have gleaned from the most adequate treatise on American civics.

From these generalizations the uninitiated reader might conclude that the Yiddish press was all of a piece, that the approach to most issues, whether American or Jewish, was more or less similar. Nothing, though, could be further from the truth. The fact is that the early history of Yiddish newspaperdom in America was replete with ideological dissension, and the polemics some of these rivals indulged in reached at times spectacular heights.

The Yiddish periodical, whether a



daily, a weekly or a monthly, never made a virtue of neutrality. Most of these papers began as the champions of one cause or another. The first Yiddish daily, the *Tageblatt*, began as the mouthpiece of orthodoxy. The *Forward* was and is the organ of labor and of social democratic doctrine. The *Warheit* was nationalist-radical, with strong Zionist leanings. These identification tags, with slight variations, might be hung on most of the Yiddish publications. In the course of time, many original positions were considerably modified. The *Morgen Journal*, originally ultra-orthodox and anti-Zionist, has become more liberal and pro-Zionist. The *Forward* has changed its attitude with reference to Jewish religious matters; it is milder, mellower. Nor does it find its socialism incompatible with Jewish aspirations in Palestine. The old "feuds" between editors have now become rarer and, by far, not as strident as they used to be. But the lines of division still exist, and the "party organs" (mainly weeklies and monthlies) still cleave strictly to party lines.

Did the Yiddish reader relish this ideological cleavage and the occasional "fireworks" resulting from it? He did. Any close observer of Jewish life a quarter of a century ago will testify to that. The ideological differences in the Yiddish press were but the mirror of the ideological differences that accompanied the first decades of Jewish immigrant life in this country. Revolutionary ideas were not prohibited in America. You could talk and write freely whenever the spirit moved you. The younger generation was easily attracted by radical slogans and flaunted their newly found freedom in the wry faces of an older generation which was trying to stem the tide of iconoclasm and of godlessness. And both young and old went to their papers to find support for the sides they had chosen. The paper supplied the reasoned argument and the historic background of these ideas. It made the reader articulate and prepared him for meeting his opponent in the labor union and in the fraternal organization. In this field, too, the Yiddish press performed an all-important function; it became a vast "preparatory school" for the democratic process, based upon the free give-and-take of ideological differences.

Jewish organized life in its varied

manifestations—economic, philanthropic, fraternal, political and cultural—could never have reached its high stage of development without the unstinted aid and constant vigilance of the Yiddish press. Its news columns were always open to the long and detailed reports coming from these organizations, whether large or small, national in scope or limited to the routine activities of some "landsman-schaft" society. The great national organizations found no difficulty in making the headlines on the front page, to receive editorial comment and to have their affairs carefully analyzed in special articles.

The emphasis in the field of Jewish communal effort differed, of course, from paper to paper. The conservative press favored philanthropic activity, religious endeavor, Jewish education. The radical press made labor its special care, fostered secular culture and paid special attention to Yiddish literature and the theatre. But, here again we meet with that rather happy inconsistency alluded to above. Whenever, in the course of time, a communal activity, at first deemed unimportant or reactionary or socially dangerous, proved its worth, showed progressive development or turned out to be socially beneficial, it was sure to receive the support of the paper which at first opposed it. These shifts were many in the history of the Yiddish press. Two instances, however, will suffice to illustrate the point.

The labor union movement among Jewish workers was, at its inception, the special care of the socialist *Forward*. In the beginning of the century, trade unionism had a strong radical tinge and, for some mystical reason, was coupled with iconoclasm and atheism. It is not unlikely that the younger generation of Jews coming to America from Czarist Russia wanted their freedom to be all-inclusive and, since the Russian church was on the side of reaction, they transferred the stigma to Jewish tradition and religious life as well. The conservative Yiddish press, notably the *Tageblatt* and *Morgen Journal*, found it necessary, therefore, to frown upon the radical movement as essentially undermining all Jewish life and hastening the process of complete assimilation. In time, however, the labor union movement became a great and telling factor in Jewish life.

The confusion of its first and boisterous entrance upon the scene subsided, and common, sober sense took its place. It built up great fraternal, social and educational institutions and, since it had now something to conserve, was no longer as averse to conservatism as formerly. Meanwhile, the two conservative dailies, the *Tageblatt* and the *Morgen Journal* (incidentally, now merged) had also somewhat shifted their positions from the extreme right towards the center, and labor unionism became, in their new orientation, as respectable as any other movement in Jewish America. Today the *Morgen Journal* has a special labor editor, and labor matters are given full and sympathetic treatment.

Exactly the reverse process took place with regard to Zionism. In the beginning of this century, Zionism in America was a rather puny affair. The old "Federation of American Zionists" had an insignificant membership and a rather inarticulate leadership which seemed unable to make the slightest impression in American Jewish life. The *Forward*, as well as the rest of the radical press, just laughed it to scorn. What sort of a movement was that which had no "masses" (a sacrosanct word in those days)? And whither would they take the Jewish people? To a Turkish province that was half desert? It was ridiculous, illogical, just wasted effort. The first world war, however, had shifted the rescue work of Jewish Palestine to the shoulders of American Jewry, and as a result of this effort, a resourceful and influential leadership had come to the fore and made its mark in Zionist history by helping to obtain the Balfour Declaration. And it was then that the ice in the radical press began to melt. The formerly intransigent *Forward* found it no longer difficult to discover not only the feasibility of Zionist effort in Palestine but also the inherent justice of the movement and the romanticism of its indomitable Chalutzim. Time, the great corrective of all ideological imperfections, did its work in this instance as well.

A similar healthy disregard for straight-laced consistency might also be noted with reference to the contents of Yiddish periodical literature. Take the case of the *Zukunft*, a monthly started more than half a century ago as the organ of theoretical socialism. For several

decades its editorship was in the hands of A. Walt-Liesin, a poet of high order, deeply rooted in the Jewish past, who printed his fervent verse, steeped in Jewish lore and infused with the spirit of Jewish rebirth, in this radical journal. Or one might go to the early files of the *Freie Arbeiter Stimme*, a weekly dedicated to the elucidation of philosophical anarchism, and find there not only occasional stories of Chassidic life, but also a series of articles in defense of Jewish tradition (by Krakauer). True, the editor would serve notice that these dissonant expositions were published on the "principle of free press and discussion." But no one was fooled thereby. They were printed because its radical editor suspected that there was some validity in the ideology of the opposing side, and he wanted it presented to his readers as something worthwhile pondering about.

The process of adjustment to changing conditions was continuous in the Yiddish press. Aside from the shifts of position noted above, there were many others, though less noticeable, in the editing and selection of material. The developments in the general field of newspaper work have greatly influenced the Yiddish newspaper. The news service has become more complete as well as more accurate. The early "clipping" period, when news columns were filled with slightly garbled versions of items taken from the metropolitan press, is long past and gone. Jewish events are covered by experienced reporters who bring to their work a thorough knowledge of the intricate relationship of men and movements in modern Jewish life. The dead level of popularization—once a necessity, since most of the early immigrants were strangers to the complexities of an industrial civilization—has long since made place for a more integrated and concise form of writing. Yiddish, in the hands of the Jewish newspapermen, has become a precise, highly articulate instrument of expression.

In general, a comparison of the Yiddish press with the press of other groups reveals a rather high cultural and spiritual level of which the Yiddish newspaper fraternity may well be proud. Incidentally, that fraternity is, by and large, an exceptional group. The majority of Yiddish journalists is exceedingly well in-

formed. College and university graduates abound. It may also be added here that most creative writers—the poets and the novelists—found in the Yiddish press the safest and most remunerative outlet for their efforts. Without the Yiddish press their work and livelihood would have been precarious indeed.

The most astounding thing about the Yiddish press is its vitality. Calculations as to its deterioration and demise have repeatedly come from various sources. After all, it is essentially an immigrant press. And now that immigration has stopped and the earlier immigrant has turned to the English newspaper, where is the circulation to come from? This is good logic. But life laughs at the logicians.

## INSIDE NEWS OF PALESTINE

By BORIS SMOLAR

THE talks which President Roosevelt had in Egypt with the Arab kings, en route home from the Crimea Conference, came as no surprise to Zionist leaders. They knew that Roosevelt would meet with them. Needless to say, American Zionist circles would have felt much happier if President Roosevelt had also summoned Dr. Weizmann for a talk. (It would have taken Dr. Weizmann only one hour by plane to come from Palestine.) But they need not be disappointed, since F. D. R. is well acquainted with the Jewish arguments regarding Palestine. One of the books that the President is now reading is "Palestine—Land of Promise," by the U. S. agricultural expert Walter C. Lowdermilk, who advocates the development of Palestine to absorb millions of Jewish newcomers.

Whatever suggestions the Arab rulers may have made to Roosevelt with regard to Palestine, it can be safely predicted that they will be ready to accept any decisions made by the "Big Three" even though these may not be fully to their liking. Indications to this effect were given by Arab statesmen to important leaders of the Jewish Agency who approached them with an offer to hold an Arab-Jewish round table meeting in order to come to a mutual understanding on the Palestine issue. The Arab statesmen declined, stating that the Palestine question is now in the hands of forces stronger than either the Jews or the

There are still four Yiddish dailies in New York, three of them quite vigorous and going strong. The *Zukunft*—venerable monthly—still appears regularly, offering Yiddish-reading "highbrows" all the theory and first-class fiction they hanker for. There are other weeklies and monthlies, catering to the needs of parties, engaged in defending ideologies, occasionally indulging themselves in a spurt of polemics. Obviously, there are readers who want to read all that in good, modern, vibrant Yiddish. And it should surprise no one if twenty-five years from now another scrivener, writing on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the Yiddish press, would be as impressed and as pleased with this inexplicable vitality as this scrivener is this day.

Arabs, or both. The Arab attitude at present can be formulated as follows: First, let the United Nations decide what solution they can offer for the Palestine problem, and let them present their decision to the Jews and the Arabs separately.

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Soviet diplomats in Arab countries, including Palestine, have been instructed to be non-committal on political questions affecting the Near East. In Palestine, Soviet consular officials occasionally meet with local Jews, but not with Jewish leaders, since this could be interpreted as semi-official talks. The same is true with regards to meetings with local Arabs.

It is now known that Stalin has formulated his policy with regard to Jewish demands for Palestine as follows: The so-called "Jewish question" is a result of anti-Semitism. No anti-Semitism exists in the U.S.S.R., therefore there is no Jewish question. The democracies are responsible for anti-Semitism because they brought Hitler, Franco and others to power, therefore, the solution of the Jewish problem is something with which the democracies alone must deal. Any decision taken by them regarding Palestine will not be opposed by the Soviet Government, which is, however, of the opinion that Jews should be protected and accorded equal rights in the countries where they live.



THE peace, repose and serenity of a Sabbath afternoon filled the room. Suddenly a beam of the Jerusalem sun broke through the clouds and enveloped the slight straight figure in the chair. It lit up the face, played on the white lace of the dark Sabbath dress, glistened on the brooch at the neck, lingered softly on the silver of the parted hair and brought into relief the dark eyes full of humanity and intelligence. We were "Sabbath visiting" with Henrietta Szold, a small group of Americans in Palestine during the winter of 1921-1922 who came "to listen and to learn" from our leader and countrywoman.

We all knew of Henrietta Szold in the United States. Some knew her father, Rabbi Benjamin Szold, others visited the apartment near City College in New York where Henrietta Szold lived with her mother. To all of us she was a writer and a scholar, the founder of the first Zionist society in the United States. Many worked with her when she organized an intimate group of friends into an organization for the "healing of the daughter of my people." My contact with her had been at the headquarters of the Zionist organization at the time of the recruiting of the Jewish Legion and the establishment of the Red Mogen David in this country.

But that afternoon we came to Henrietta Szold, as we did so many Sabbaths before and afterward, "to listen and to learn."

Henrietta Szold was telling us of her most recent visit to a camp of Halutzim who were building the "kvish," highway, between Samakh and Afule. The "kvish camp" was at Migdal, the tents hugged the hillside and below in the valley was the "kvish" which the Halutzim were building. It rained all the time she was there, and the sticky mud clung to one's feet. The kitchen was only partly roofed, and the rain fell in big drops into the kettles of boiling soup. Mud all around, yet she found a white cover for the beds, a picture here and there or a bit of bright embroidery.

Henrietta Szold talked with the girls while bending over the smoking primus stove and lifting kettles much beyond her strength; she watched the primitive laundering of heavy work-clothes; she sat on a pile of stones while a girl worker

## HENRIETTA SZOLD—PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

By SOPHIE UDIN GINGULD

broke gravel for the kvish. She carefully examined the "tent" hospital, filled to overflowing with malaria and dysentery patients. At night, by candle light, she watched the joyous young faces as they danced the Hora. Once, the night became suddenly very quiet as the rain stopped and a white moon silvered the landscape. Henrietta Szold lay sleepless in her tent. From a distance came the crying of the jackal. This American-bred woman felt herself one with "this generation that will have to perish to fructify the soil."

As we listened to her talk that Sabbath afternoon we were completely oblivious to the fact that Henrietta Szold was already past sixty and that during many of the years of her life she had given service to the Zionist cause and was one of the outstanding leaders in Zionism. She was now truly living a new life and was undergoing "what is without exaggeration the biggest experience of my life."

It was a hard life. Often, in heavy rain, we saw Henrietta Szold trudge ankle-deep in mud to reach her office on Jaffa Road. Jerusalem winters are cold. There was little heat from kerosine-lamp stoves and the tile floors seemed to hold moisture and cold. Many a Sabbath we found her bundled up in layers of sweaters. We knew that she worked endless hours to clear her correspondence, reports and memoranda. Her lamp burned late, for she read the magazines and books brought by the latest post as well as the current Palestinian publications. Nevertheless, she was ever reaching out for more and more, "for in Palestine there is a strenuous stirring."

Many a Sabbath, in our talks, we grew impatient with the slow advance of Zionism, with the one step forward and two steps back policy of the government, and clearly there rises before me the picture of Henrietta Szold at such a discussion, with that familiar gesture of emphasizing points by counting them off on her fingers: "I am so constituted that I see no promise in any movement which is

not built up slowly, bit by bit, each layer of stone and each trowelful of cement tested by every known principle of organization."

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Henrietta Szold returned to Palestine in 1926, and again her room at the "pension" became ours on Sabbath; or in the early spring, after the rains, she would walk to "Schiller's wood" and look down on the hills around Jerusalem covered with anemones "brilliant red, white, purple and lilac." Greater and greater responsibilities were placed upon the frail but courageous woman. In 1927 she became one of the three members of the Palestine Executive Committee. The country enjoyed comparative tranquility, but there was serious unemployment in the Yishuv. The unemployed stormed the Municipality of Jerusalem. Word of the disturbance quickly spread and almost immediately there appeared in the crowd the well known and beloved figure of Henrietta Szold. There was reverence among the men who a few minutes previously were almost uncontrollable. "Henrietta Szold has come!" "Henrietta Szold is here!" She stood on a balcony



*Henrietta Szold*

and putting her hands in front of her she enumerated on her fingers their problems. At once these half-starved and desperate men sensed her sincerity and her real desire to help them.

There lives in my memory the unforgettable picture of Henrietta Szold at the Kotel Hamaarivi. It is Tisha b'Ab. Down, down we go through the dimly lit streets, past the shuttered bazaars. Now we are nearing the "Wall." Hundreds of people sit on the pavement in front of the "Kotel." They are in groups, or "shulen," each around its lantern, which throws fitful shadows on the swaying figures. Here the leader is interpreting the Lamentations in a sing-song Yiddish; here a Yemenite plaintively sings the Hebrew verse; here a Bokhara Jew in many-colored garb is swaying to the sad melody. We are strangely silent. Henrietta Szold's face is sad and sweet, but her eyes, they are dark with the pathos and the tragedy of this Night of Lamentations, and soon she joins in the prayers of the destruction of the Holy City.

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Not until 1935 was I again to visit Henrietta Szold in her room in Jerusalem. At seventy-five she had assumed new responsibilities. The first group of the Youth Aliyah had already been settled at Ain Harod in 1934; but Henrietta Szold was ever ready to take a car to this or that settlement to discuss plans for the children which were to come shortly. She herself tells us of this new activity. "The transport of youth from Germany is not only chockful of time-consuming details but the undertaking is so overwhelmingly responsible that I sometimes am all but mastered by the impulse to flee from it." But instead, her life became completely submerged in the work for Youth Aliyah.

I was at Yagur, near Haifa. A group of Youth Aliyah had been received but a short while ago. Word came that Henrietta Szold was coming. Such a hurrying and bustling! Such a polishing up and washing up! And here was the auto, and the little frail, straight figure. There were tired lines on her face after the fatiguing hot, dusty drive from Jerusalem. But she saw the children and her face was alit with a deep quiet joy. They surrounded her and pressed as close as possible to her. But now came the offi-

cial reception in the dining room, and following it the visit to the houses where Youth Aliyah lived. Are there screens on the windows? This one seems to be broken a little. Is the plumbing in working order? Do the children use the mosquito nets and tuck them in carefully? Oh, the classrooms—they need a few pictures! Everywhere Miss Szold notes each detail which is to add to the welfare of her children. She takes lunch with them. The food is nourishing and pleasantly served. She remembers to visit the kitchen and compliment the staff on its spic and spanness. There are conferences with the *Madrichim*, the instructors and guides of Youth Aliyah. Other conferences with the teachers and Vaad of Yagur. A long, long day, but Miss Szold must look to every detail. In the evening there is a concert in her honor. Do I catch her head nodding? No, it is merely a nod of appreciation as the newcomers sing the songs of Halutzim and dance the Hora. And now Henrietta Szold speaks to the Youth Aliyah at Yagur of their life and responsibilities. "You are the bearers of the Youth Aliyah movement and the Jews throughout the world are watching your activities with hope and confidence. There are three things which you should always keep in mind as constituting the cornerstones of your life. The first is that you identify yourselves with work . . . you place your whole strength, each at the post assigned

to you, in the service of national integration. And then I want to say something about your responsibility for the fellowship in which you live. Each of you who exercises discipline, each of you who behaves towards his fellows in a friendly and comradely fashion exerts an influence upon the level of the life of the group. In conclusion, I would like to ask you to do something which you will doubtless regard as being too obvious for words. Think of your parents, write to them, let them take part in your experiences. For they have not the good fortune of being able to begin life anew."

\* \* \*

Such was Henrietta Szold, our great teacher-leader whom we love and venerate. She will never die. The work to which she so fully gave herself is the foundation of Zionism; and the roots of her soul are deeply embedded in the soil of a reclaimed Holy Land.

Our world is in chaos. Jewish children have suffered so much. But in other nations there are also homeless refugee children. Henrietta Szold's methods in her work with Youth Aliyah will prove invaluable in the rehabilitation of the young of the war-wrecked world. She, this "mother of Youth Aliyah," has built not only for her own children but for all children of all humanity.

## Dr. Silver in Response to Roosevelt and Churchill

EXPRESSING disappointment at Prime Minister Churchill's and President Roosevelt's references to the Palestine problem in their reports on the Crimea Conference, Dr. Abba Hillel Silver has issued a statement to the press urging American Zionists to mobilize behind "a vigorous, militant policy."

"Mr. Churchill has made it clear that no decision on Palestine has been taken, nor is one contemplated until the end of the war," Dr. Silver said. "In my opinion there was never solid ground for anticipating a positive pro-Zionist declaration to issue from Malta, Yalta or Egypt. I made no secret of my views, but always cautioned against false hopes and unfounded optimism. Repeatedly I warned my fellow Zionists that our battle was far from won and advocated a policy of constant vigilance and unrelenting mili-

tant action along our whole political front to ensure ultimate victory. For this I was bitterly attacked and my policy denounced by those who thought they knew better, who imagined themselves to be in the know, and who fostered a false atmosphere of inflated expectation. They attached exaggerated importance to their personal standing in official circles. They decried public agitation and the pressure of public opinion as harmful and a Congressional Resolution on Palestine as superfluous, untimely and inconsequential. They believed the time had come for our 'diplomats' to take over. . . . In the face of this new and bitter disappointment, our movement must recover its sense of reality, shake off illusions and gird itself for the great struggle which still lies ahead.



**P**ASSOVER is the greatest of the Jewish festivals. Its importance is indicated by the number of times it is mentioned in the Pentateuch and the other books of the Bible.

In the Book of Exodus there is a full description of the first Passover in Egypt: "Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying: In the tenth day of this month (Nisan) they shall take every man a lamb, according to their families. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year, ye shall take it from the sheep or from the goats, and ye shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the month and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at dusk. And they shall take of the blood and put it on two of the sideposts and on the lintel upon the houses where they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roasted with fire and unleavened bread, with bitter herbs, they shall eat it" (Ex. 12, 3-8). This is as vivid a description of the preparation of the first Paschal lamb as we may find elsewhere.

In Exodus, too, we are reminded to observe the Passover festival as formerly commanded for seven days in the month of Abib, that is the month of early spring, the month of freshness and early ripening. Emphasis is laid on the consumption of matzoth during these seven days. In Leviticus, both the Paschal lamb on the evening of the 14th day of Nisan and the use of matzoth during the week are stressed. In Numbers we are told that the Passover festival was observed in the wilderness, but a new factor was added. Some men were contaminated by having touched dead bodies, and so were unable to perform the rite of the Paschal lamb. They were told that they could proceed with the entire ceremonial of the Paschal lamb on the 14th evening of the second month. This was known as the "Pesach Sheni," the Second Pesach.

In Numbers, emphasis is laid on the sacrifices to be offered during the entire festival. Deuteronomy gives a detailed account of the acceptable view of the Passover when there was an established place of sacrifice and worship. The passage reads: "Observe the month of Nisan and keep the Passover unto the Lord, thy God, for in the month of Abib, the Lord, thy God, brought

## GREAT FESTIVAL—THE STORY OF PASSOVER

By DR. E. N. RABINOWITZ

thee forth out of Egypt by night. And thou shalt sacrifice the Passover offering unto the Lord, thy God, of the flock and the herd in the place which the Lord shall choose to cause his name to dwell there." Then there is a continuation of the command to eat the unleavened bread, the bread of affliction. Compare this with the passage in Exodus in which we are told that the Israelites were urged hastily out of Egypt. They had no time to prepare the dough, and therefore had to use the unleavened mixture.

The first Passover celebrated by the Israelites after they crossed the Jordan into the Promised Land is described in Joshua: "And the children of Israel kept the Passover on the fourteenth of the month at even in the plains of Jericho. And they did eat of the produce of the land on the morrow after the Passover, unleavened cake and parched corn, the self-same day." Less than a half century before the destruction of the first temple, during the reign of the pious King Josiah, of Judah, Passover was celebrated with great pomp according to the king's wishes.

During the Second Commonwealth, as we can gather from Rabbinic literature, much ado was made over the Passover celebration. The Mishna Pesachim, consisting of ten chapters and the two Talmudim, deal to a great extent with the manner of preparation of the Paschal lamb, the methods of removal of the "Chametz," and what is permissible and what is prohibited as food for the festival.

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Our ancestors of a generation or two ago were busy with preparations for the Passover a great part of the winter. In their zeal they went beyond the Rabbinic statement: "Questions are asked and lectures are given on the laws of Passover for thirty days before Passover." What with the preparation and fermentation of mead and beet-soup (borscht), this was a task to occupy the mother of the household for some days. The collection of fats, especially goose and chicken fat, was also the concern of the housewife. The father was interested in the preparation

of wine for the Sedorim and for Kiddush throughout the festival. As the winter progressed and the festival approached, the thoughts of all the family turned towards new clothes. Even in the poorest families some changes in the outward appearance of its members were expected. Then the question of Matzoth and Matzah products came up. Every family had to bake its own Matzah in community bakeries where rather primitive conditions prevailed.

Just before the Passover, the question of dishes was paramount. An inventory of the dishes had to be made, especially of glassware which may have been lost or broken and had to be renewed for the coming festival. On the Sabbath before Passover, the Shabbas Haggadol, the Rabbi of the Synagogue, in one of his few speeches of the year, instructed his congregants what could be used and what was forbidden during Passover and how to avoid the implications of "chametz," prohibited food combinations.

During the month of Nisan no fasting is permitted, nor is it permitted to hold a *hesped*, a memorial sermon. The reason for this is given in Massecheth, Soferim 21, 1. During this month, the tabernacle was set up in the wilderness, and in the first twelve days of Nisan the princes of the people offered their gifts and their sacrifices as related in Numbers 7, 1-89.

The only exception to the prohibition of fasting is on the day before the Passover, when the first-born are required to fast as a reminder that the Hebrew first-born were saved while all the Egyptians were slain.

No prayers of supplication are to be recited during the month of Nisan, the month of Redemption. It is expected that the future redemption of the Jews will be in the month of Nisan.

The prohibition of leaven comes under the Biblical injunction of Exodus 12, 7, "and there shall be no bread seen with thee." Again in Exodus 12, 19, "Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your house." To prevent the presence of

leaven in the home, the head of the household resorts to various procedures. There is the *Bedibath Chametz*, the search for leaven. This takes place on the evening before *Erev Pesach*, except when the first day of Passover is on a Sunday. Then, the *Bedikath Chametz* is pushed back one day to the Thursday before the festival. The master of the house takes a candle, preferably a wax candle, and crumbs of bread are scattered over the window sills and other places where *Chametz* will have accumulated. This is done to make sure that the benediction will not be in vain. With a feather brush, the crumbs are pushed into a small box and put away for the next morning. Before the search, a benediction is uttered, for the removal of leaven. After the completion of the search, the following is recited, "All manner of leaven that is in my possession which I have not seen nor removed shall be null and accounted as the dust of the earth."

On the 14th day of Nisan, at 10 o'clock in the morning, the crumbs collected on the night before, and what is left over from breakfast, is burned and the following recited: "All manner of leaven that is in my possession which I have seen and which I have not removed shall be null and accounted as the dust of the earth." If the Eve of Passover is on Saturday night, the removal of leaven takes place on Friday. Enough food is stored away for the Sabbath eve and morning.

In order to be rid of all leaven which may be stored in granaries and storage houses, the Rabbis have ordered what is known as *Mechirath Chametz*, the sale of the leaven. This is done by selling all the leaven to a Gentile; generally through a Rabbi who has chosen his Gentile for the purpose. All the property is returned after Passover. Leaven that is otherwise left over may not be used after Passover.

No leavened bread or other leavened products may be eaten after 9 A.M. on the 14th of Nisan, the day before Passover. Those who have poor appetites are permitted to fast until the evening so as to be able to partake of the matzoh with zest.

The great Passover ceremony is the Seder. This is a ceremony which goes back, in variable forms, to the hoary ages.

Outgrowth of the Temple Celebration and its sources are the Bible, the Tanaitic Midrashim, the ordinary prayer book, the book of Psalms, some medieval liturgical sources and, finally, some childish games and nursery rhymes. The oldest portion is probably the section which reads, "this is the bread of affliction." This was written in Aramaic, the vernacular of the Jewish people during the second commonwealth. In it are mentioned the celebration of Passover with the Paschal lamb. The four questions are also very old and are taken, with modifications, from the Mishna Pesachim.

The reply to the son's questions are ten, given in Pesachim in a statement of Mar Samuel, a great Babylonian scholar of the third century C.E.

The portion of the Haggadah dealing with the Rabbis at Bne Berak is found nowhere else. The section of the four sons is based on the fact that in four in-

stances in the Pentateuch we are told to instruct our sons in regards to the observance of Passover and other laws. The Haggadah shows no changes through the ages, the text of Maimonides, Abudraham and Machzor Vitry are all strikingly similar to our accepted Haggadah. The finest portion of the Haggadah text are the Psalms 113-118, read before and after the meal. These Psalms seem to have been recited during the preparation and consumption of the Paschal lamb, and were changed by the Levites. Another part of the Haggadah, outstandingly beautiful, is the Nishmath, taken from the Sabbath Prayer Book. Legend has it that it was composed by Simon Caiaphas, more generally known as St. Peter, at a time of contriteness. This is hardly acceptable because Peter was an ignorant man, and never rose to the heights of ecstasy of this fine hymn.

[Continued on page 23]

## THE MEANING OF THE PASSOVER SYMBOLS

**P**ESACH means "The Pascal Lamb," the blood of which, according to the Biblical tradition, was smeared on the doorposts of Israelite homes as a signal to the angel of death to "pass over" the homes of the Israelites.

*Haggadah* means "story."

*Bedikath Hometz* means searching for the leaven. The head of the house conducts an impressive ceremony searching for the leaven. He holds a candle in his hand and gathers crumbs of bread carefully placed in advance.

*Seder* means "order," or program of exercises at the home celebration.

*Matzoh* is the unleavened bread eaten in recollection of the hurried departure from Egypt.

*The Four Cups*—Each has a specific place in the service. The first serves as the *kiddush*, the second is taken at the conclusion of the first part of the Seder. The third is the cup marking the conclusion of the grace after the meal, while the fourth cup comes at the conclusion of the Seder.

*The Cup of Elijah*—Jewish tradition pictures Elijah as the herald of the great Messianic era, when God's reign will be fully established amongst men. Hence a cup is kept ready and is designated as the "Cup of Elijah."

*Karpas*, or parsley, is made part of the

meal to signify a festive supper, as befits a great occasion.

*Moror* is the horse-radish symbolizing the bitter plight of the enslaved Israelites.

*Haroses* is made of a mixture of apples, nuts and wine. Originally it was used as a medicinal protection against the sharpness of the bitter herbs. Because of its color it is taken as a reminder of the bricks and mortar with which the Israelites built the Egyptian structures at the order of their taskmasters.

*The Shank-Bone* is emblematic of the pascal lamb. To this day, the Samaritans at Nablus still sacrifice a pascal lamb on Pesach amidst quaint ceremonies.

*The Egg* represents the Passover festive offering.

*Afikomen* is a Greek word meaning "dessert." In Temple days the meal would end with the meat of the pascal lamb. In our days we make the matzoh the official dessert of the Seder meal. To keep the children alert during the Seder, the Afikomen is hidden.

### "Pass on the Review"

Send the "Review" to a man in service you know. He will enjoy reading it and appreciate your thoughtfulness.



# NEWS OF THE MONTH

**A** PLEA to the Jewish public not to form hasty conclusions concerning the Yalta conference in relation to the Palestine issue was made by Zionist leaders at a meeting of the National Executive of the Zionist Organization of America. Jewish public opinion was counseled to withhold judgment on the actions of Roosevelt and Churchill until definite word will have been ascertained regarding decisions reached on Jewish problems and Palestine.

☆

THE trial of Rumanians charged with organizing a pogrom in the city of Jassy on the 29th of June, 1941, during which 12,000 Jews were massacred, opened in Bucharest before the special tribunal for war criminals.

☆

A GROUP of 44 Jewish survivors from the Oswiecim "extermination camp" arrived in Bucharest, including a number of Jews who were deported by the Germans from Paris and Brussels. Several groups of Jewish survivors from Oswiecim have arrived in Budapest.

☆

THE Government of the Lithuanian Soviet Republic has appointed a commission to receive several hundred Jewish women liberated by the Russian Army from the German concentration camp in Torun, Poland.

☆

PURIM services, a week late, were held in Munschen-Gladbach in a castle belonging to Dr. Joseph Goebbels by front-line troops who were too busy fighting during the holiday.

Capt. Manuel Poliakoff of Baltimore, a Jewish chaplain, carefully arranged the candles over a swastika-bedecked bookcase in Goebbels' main dining room. Pfc. Arnold Reich of Meadville, Pa. and Corp. Martin Willen of Baltimore assisted the chaplain.

The services were attended by a large crowd, which filled the vast room. Jew-

ish and non-Jewish soldiers were in the audience, and the Jews explained to their Christian comrades who Haman was and why it was so fitting that Purim services should be held in a castle belonging to Goebbels.

☆

ALTHOUGH the Greek Government has announced its readiness to rescind the law under which Jewish property was confiscated during the German occupation, the problem of restoration is not acute at present in Salonica for the simple reason that there are very few Jews left in this city which had a Jewish population of about 60,000 before the outbreak of the war.

☆

THE Jewish community of this city is slowly rebuilding its cultural and religious life despite the fact that four years of German occupation reduced Belgrade's Jewish population from 12,000 to about 800.

Both of Belgrade's synagogues were destroyed and all of its rabbis were killed, as, indeed, were all the rabbis of Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, services are being held regularly Friday and Saturday, with two laymen of the community in charge.

Dr. Friedrich Pops, for 35 years president of the local Jewish community and for the past 19 years head of the Yugoslav Union of Jews, is still an active leader. All during the German occupation Dr. Pops hid in the heart of Belgrade in the home of a Serb Christian family. A bearded, white-haired old man, he talks cheerfully of the reconstruction of Jewish life in Yugoslavia, where the National Liberation Committee has already restored full citizenship rights to the Jewish population.

☆

JEWISH refugees from Poland, Lithuania and Latvia who are now in Uzbekistan have been notified by the Soviet authorities to prepare for repatriation to their former homes.

It was estimated here that there are between 150,000 and 200,000 Polish

Jews in Uzbekistan who may be repatriated to Poland. The number of Baltic Jews is comparatively small, since few succeeded in escaping into Russia prior to the German occupation of the Baltic countries. It is assumed here that these Polish Jews, who are considered Soviet citizens because they were born in Polish territory now claimed by Russia, will not be included among the repatriates.

☆

DR. CHAIM WEIZMANN, president of the Jewish Agency, has left Palestine for Cairo. Prior to his departure he addressed a session of the Small Zionist Actions Committee on the political situation, warning against pessimism, but at the same time emphasizing that "there is no ground for exaggerated optimism." Declaring that he presumes that "Britain has begun thinking about our problem, although she has not yet reached any decision," Dr. Weizmann said: "I believe we are going toward better days. I am convinced that you—at least the younger people—will live to see a Jewish State." After spending several days in the Middle East he will proceed to London and from there to the United States.

☆

EDITORIALS in Swedish newspapers indicate that public opinion in Sweden disapproves of the fact that the solution of the Palestine question has been postponed by the Allies until after the war.

"Not only the Jews, but the entire world is tensely awaiting the Allied decisions on Palestine and on other questions concerning Jews," the *Svenska Morgenbladet* writes. The *Dagens Nyheter*, another leading newspaper, analyzing the Jewish problem, advocates that Sweden open its doors to "a moderate Jewish immigration."

☆

DR. IGNACY SCHWARZBART, Jewish member of the Polish National Council in London, appealed to leaders of the Allied Nations to take effective measures against Germany's segregation in separate camps of the Jews among Polish war prisoners.

Confirmation of such segregation reached Dr. Schwarzbart from the International Red Cross. Emphasizing that the segregated Jewish soldiers face the danger of annihilation, Dr. Schwarzbart asked that the Allied Nations exchange them for German prisoners. The British

section of the World Jewish Congress submitted a similar appeal to the Foreign Office here. (In New York, the Emergency Committee to Save the Jewish People of Europe cabled to Gen. Eisenhower asking for a warning of stern retaliation against German prisoners held by the Allies.)

☆

LESS than ten per cent of the 75,000 Jews who lived in Yugoslavia before the war are now alive. The surviving Jews have been guaranteed the same rights as all citizens of Yugoslavia under a decree of the National Liberation Committee, although the problem of property restoration is still being worked out. Jews are again in government positions, and a Jew, Moshe Piade, is vice-president of the Provisional Parliament.

☆

THE Official Gazette of Bulgaria published a law which provides for the return of confiscated Jewish property and for the annulment of all anti-Jewish regulations. All land, excepting that upon which Bulgarian peasants have settled, will be returned to the former Jewish owners. Compensation on the basis of land prices of two years ago will be paid for unreturned land. Rent collected by the government from confiscated Jewish houses will be refunded to the owners. Compulsory sales by Jews of stocks and bonds are considered void. The Bulgarian Government will start refunding amounts owed to Jews immediately, providing the total owed an individual does not exceed fifty thousand leva, approximately \$625. If the amount exceeds this sum, the balance will be paid in government bonds redeemable within six years. The Sofia radio reported in a Hebrew broadcast that Jewish community councils have been re-established in thirty-three Bulgarian towns.

☆

FOR the first time since the Soviet Revolution, the Jews of the U.S.S.R. joined world Jewry in a fast day proclaimed by the Palestine Rabbinate to commemorate the Jewish communities annihilated by the Germans.

☆

18,000 PERSONS filled the vast Luna Park sports arena in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and paid tribute to the estimated 5,000,000 Jews murdered in Europe. They pledged assistance to the surviving

Jews in liberated Europe. The meeting was called by the D.A.I.A., the central organization of Argentine Jewry.

☆

THE Turkish Embassy in Washington has informed the group calling itself the Hebrew Committee for National Liberation that Eri Jabotinsky was deported from Istanbul to Palestine at the request of the British Ambassador in Turkey "as he was believed to have been involved in the assassination of the late British Resident Minister in the Near East."

Jabotinsky, who was in Turkey on what the Hebrew Committee terms a "rescue mission," was released from the Feru jail in Palestine, to which he was taken by police authorities upon his reaching the Palestine frontier. He will be obliged to reside in Haifa and to report his movements to the police.

☆

ARCHBISHOP DAMASKINOS, Regent of Greece, announced that all anti-Jewish laws adopted during the German occupation will be repealed. Measures to be rescinded include those providing for the confiscation of Jewish property, expulsion of Jews from the country and their exclusion from the liberal professions.

☆

THE rehabilitation of the Jewish community of Poland and the rebuilding of Jewish culture there was discussed at an

over-flow meeting in the hall of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in Moscow, attended by leading Polish and Russian Jews.

☆

THE first conference of the Zionist Laborites to be held since the liberation of France met in Paris with 600 delegates in attendance. Guests included Daniel Meyer, secretary of the French Socialist Party, who brought official greetings from his organization, and Mme. Rene Blum, daughter-in-law of Leon Blum.

☆

IN the presence of a delegation from the Federation of Jewish Communities in Rumania, the bodies of 126 Jews massacred by Germans and Hungarians in the township of Camar, Transylvania, were exhumed. The corpses were then given a Jewish burial.

☆

ABOUT one million Jews in Europe will have to be moved to new homes during the post-war period, Abraham Herman, president of the HIAS, told 2,500 delegates attending the annual convention of the organization at the Hotel Astor. To meet the transportation needs of dislocated Jews in 1945, the convention adopted a budget of \$1,808,000, the largest in the sixty years of the HIAS immigration activities.

## New York State First to Bar Discrimination in Employment

NEW YORK became the first state in the nation to officially bar racial and religious discrimination in employment when the Senate, by a vote of 49 to 6, adopted the Ives-Quinn bill.

The bill becomes effective on July 1. It creates a five-man commission charged with fighting racial and religious discrimination in employment as the opening gun in a long-range and broader program aimed against all types of discrimination. To prepare the way for this goal, the bill provides that the commission may begin immediately to administer educational and persuasive anti-discrimination programs all over the state.

In the field of employment, the bill carries maximum penalties for offenders convicted of discrimination of a year in

jail or \$500 fine, or both.

Similar legislation is under consideration in Massachusetts and New Jersey. A public hearing on bills for a permanent FEPC was held in Boston, and prominent civic leaders have voiced their approval of such legislation.

In Trenton, capital of New Jersey, both Democratic and Republican legislators are supporting legislation to bar discrimination. The Democrats have already introduced several bills and the Republicans announced that they will introduce a measure which has the support of the state's chief executive, Gov. Walter E. Edge.

In addition, California, Illinois, Pennsylvania and Connecticut have similar legislation pending.



# BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER ACTIVITIES

## PASSOVER SERVICES AND SEDORIM

THE services for the first days of the Passover holiday will be held on Wednesday evening, March 28th and Thursday evening, March 29th at 7 o'clock and on Thursday and Friday mornings, March 29th and 30th at 8:30 o'clock. Our cantor, Rev. Rubin Tucker, will officiate on both days. Rabbi Levinthal will preach on the significance of the Passover festival both on Thursday and Friday mornings.

### *Passover Sedorim \**

THE first Seder, Wednesday evening, March 28th, will begin at 7:30 o'clock and the second Seder will begin at 7:30.

### *Lighting of Candles During Passover*

THE lighting of candles during Passover on Wednesday and Thursday evenings, March 28th and 29th, will be at 6:58. On Friday evening, March 30th at 7:00.

On the concluding days of Passover candles will be lit on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, April 3rd and 4th

at 7:05. On Friday evening, April 6th at 7:08.

### *Concluding Passover Services*

SERVICES for the concluding days of the Passover holiday will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, April 3rd and 4th at 7 o'clock and on Wednesday and Thursday mornings, April 4th and 5th at 8:30 o'clock.

Yizkor (memorial services for the dead) will be recited at the services on the last day of Passover, Thursday, April 5th at about 10:30 o'clock. Rev. Tucker will officiate on both days. The sermon on Wednesday morning will be delivered by Rabbi Mordecai Lewittes and on the concluding day of the holiday, Thursday, Rabbi Levinthal will preach.

### *Siyum Services for First-Born Wednesday Morning*

SERVICES for the first-born son (Siyum) will be held on Wednesday morning at 7:30 and 8:30 o'clock. Mr. Edelheit of the Hebrew School faculty will speak.

### **Rabbi Levinthal's Address**

RABBI LEVINTHAL delivered the Invocation at the Annual Meeting and Fortieth Anniversary of the Brooklyn Chapter of the American Red Cross, at the Hotel St. George on February 20th. He was also elected a member of the Board of Directors of the Red Cross.

On March 7th, the Rabbi was the guest speaker in Montreal, Canada, at a dinner in behalf of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

On March 20th, the Rabbi took part in the Centenary Religious Institute, in Temple Emanu-el, New York, delivering an address on "The Problems of Evil"—with special reference to war and its underlying meaning.

On Sunday evening, February 25th, Rabbi Levinthal was one of the speakers at the annual dinner of the Histadrut Ivrit at the Hotel Astor.

### **Closing Lecture on Talmudic Series**

MR. EDELHEIT will deliver his closing lecture this Sabbath, March 24th at five o'clock, on the series "The Ethical Teachings of the Talmud." He will discuss the following topics: (a) "Filial Love, Respect and Duty"; (b) "Honoring of Rabbis and Scholars."

### **Sisterhood Monthly Meeting April 9th**

THE next regular monthly meeting of the Sisterhood will be held on Monday, April 9th at 1:30 P.M. The cultural program will include a most interesting analysis of the new book "Germany's Stepchildren" by Liptzin and will be given by our ever popular Mrs. Naomi Finkelstein. Refreshments will be served.

### **School Notes**

THE annual Passover Model Seder of the Hebrew and Sunday Schools will be held before the Passover. Mr. Shpall's 3B-2 class will conduct the Seder, with

Rabbi Lewittes presiding. The following will take part: Herbert Bressman, Stuart Fay, Paul Kaufman, Leonard Littke, Marvin Lutzker, Dorothy Pine, Paul Stavitsky, Ronald Altman, Bertram Rudofsky, Samuel Weinstein, Stephen Weinstein, Marilyn Backinoff, Edward Yalker, Barbara Schwartz, Carole Kessler, Martin Weseley and Alen Weseley.

The Purim celebration featuring Palestinian movies by Mr. Edelheit was a great success. A feature of the celebration was a choral number under the direction of Mr. Julius Grossman.

The schools are now collecting funds for Hebrew Education in connection with the Histadrut Ivrit campaign and for chalutzim in Palestine in connection with the Gewerkschaften campaign.

### **P.T.A. Hebrew and Sunday School**

THE monthly meeting of the Parent-Teachers' Association was held Thursday, March 8th. Mr. Samuel Edelheit, a member of the faculty, presented movies on "Historic Palestine." The movie featured Old and Modern Jerusalem, a trip to Hebron and Bethlehem, Excursion to the Dead Sea, the Wilderness of Judea and the Samaritan Celebration of Passover. Mr. K. Karl Klein presided. Rabbi Mordecai Lewittes spoke.

The next meeting of the P.T.A. will be held on Thursday evening, April 19th. Mr. Shpall of the faculty will speak on "The Jew in American History."

### **Sabbath Services**

KINDLING of candles at 6:58 P.M.

Friday evening services at 6:00.

Sabbath services, Parsha "Zav," will commence at 8:45 A.M.

Rabbi Levinthal will preach on the weekly portion of the Torah.

Mr. Edelheit will continue his interesting lectures in Yiddish this Saturday at 5:00 P.M. sharp. All are welcome.

Mincha services at 6:00.

### **Daily Services**

MORNING services at 7:00 and 8:00 o'clock.

Mincha services at 7:00.

## STANDING COMMITTEES

JUDGE EMANUEL GREENBERG, President of the Brooklyn Jewish Center, has appointed the following heads of standing committees of the institution:

### *Budget Committee*

Samuel Lemberg, Chairman

### *Catering Committee*

Dr. Moses Spatt, Chairman

### *Cemetery Committee*

Samuel Lemberg, Chairman

Isidor Fine, Vice Chairman

### *Chevre Kadisha Committee*

Louis Albert, Chairman

### *Delinquent Accounts Committee*

Morton Klinghoffer, Chairman

### *Forum and Education Committee*

Harry Blickstein, Chairman

Isaac Siegmeister, Vice Chairman

### *Committee on Fund Raising Activities*

Dr. Moses Spatt, Chairman

### *Hebrew Education Committee*

Frank Schaeffer, Chairman

Max Goldberg, Vice Chairman

### *House Committee*

Hyman Aaron, Chairman

Bernard J. Aaron, Vice Chairman

### *Library Committee*

Irving L. Cohen, Chairman

Morris Neinken, Vice Chairman

### *Membership Committee*

Maurice Bernhardt, Chairman

Samuel H. Goldberg, Vice Chairman

### *Physical Training Committee*

David B. Kaminsky, Chairman

Albert Witty, Vice Chairman

### *Religious Service Committee*

Abraham Ginsburg, Chairman

Morris D. Wender, Vice Chairman

### *Social Committee*

Saul S. Abelov, Chairman

Ira I. Gluckstein, Vice Chairman

### *Committee on Youth Activities*

Jesse J. Fine, Chairman

Sol W. Amster, Vice Chairman

### *Visitations Committee*

Louis Simon, Chairman

Philip Palevsky, Vice Chairman

### *Committee on Zionist Activities*

Isidor Fine, Chairman

## Club News

### *Purim Carnival*

THE annual Purim carnival sponsored by all the clubs was held Saturday, March 3rd at 8:30 P.M. Club members and their friends attended. Each club was in charge of a booth. An enjoyable evening was spent by all. Part of the proceeds will be given to the Histadrut campaign for Chalutzim in Palestine.

### *Junior League*

The newly-organized Junior League has held successful social and business meetings on Thursday nights. Young men and women of college age who are children of Center members are urged to attend.

### *Inta League*

In recent weeks the Inta League had some very interesting programs, including an important discussion relating to the Jew in the limited states.

The clubs are making plans to raise funds for the United Jewish Appeal.

### *Shomrim*

The Shomrim devoted a few meetings to a discussion of the significance of Purim as well as outstanding events of the past months.

### *Vivalets*

The Vivalets were hosts at a Purim party to the Shomrim. The features of the party were games and dancing. A good time was had by all who attended.

### *Maccabees-Tzofim*

Like the other clubs, the Maccabees made their preparation for the Carnival at their meetings. They played games and discussed the significance of Purim. Most of the meetings during the past month were held in conjunction with the Tzofim.

### *Candle-Lights*

The Candle-Lights had a busy month making plans for the Carnival. Another feature of the club was the discussion on the rise and development of anti-Semitism in connection with Purim.

### *Rachel Judeans*

The Rachel Judeans which meet every Sunday afternoon, arranged a trip to the Planetarium on March 2nd. The trip was a great success.

### *Holiday Gym Schedule*

THE gym and baths department will be open to men and boys on Wednesday

afternoon, March 28th from 1 to 4 P.M. The department will be closed on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, March 29th, 30th and 31st and will reopen on Sunday morning, April 1st at 10 o'clock. The regular Sunday schedule will prevail.

For the concluding Passover holidays, the gym and baths department will be open on Tuesday afternoon, April 3rd for men and boys from 1 to 4 P.M. The department will then be closed on Wednesday and Thursday, April 4th and 5th and will reopen on Friday afternoon, April 6th at 1 P.M.

### **"Center Bulletin" Will Not Be Published During Passover**

DUE to the intervening Passover holidays our weekly *Center Bulletin* will not be published before Friday, April 13th.

### **Young Folks League Meeting Postponed to April 10th**

DUE to the intervening Passover holidays the meeting of the Young Folks League, scheduled for Tuesday evening, April 3rd, will be held the following week, Tuesday, April 10th at 8:30 o'clock.

### **Acknowledgment of Gifts**

WE acknowledge, with thanks, receipt of gifts to the library from Mrs. Erna Fischbach, Mr. K. Karl Klein, S. L. Kurshan and Suzanne Shapiro.

We extend our thanks also to Mr. and Mrs. L. Robinsky, who presented the Junior Congregation with a *Bechar*, in memory of Lazar Robinsky.

### **Bar Mitzvah**

A HEARTY Mazel Tov is extended to Mr. and Mrs. Max Rothman of 770 Empire Boulevard upon the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Lawrence, which will be celebrated at the Center Saturday morning, April 7th.

### **Congratulations**

WE extend our heartiest congratulations to:

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Greene of 408 Crown Street on the birth of a son to their children, Mr. and Mrs. George Greene, on March 14th. Congratulations are also extended to the great-grandmother, Mrs. Mary Duberstein, of 406 Crown Street.

Mr. and Mrs. Simon Katz of 675 Empire Boulevard on the occasion of the celebration of their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary on March 25th.



# APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

The following have applied for membership in the Brooklyn Jewish Center:

ALPER, SOL  
Res. 1920 Union St.  
Bus. Luggage, 1196—6th Ave.  
Married  
*Proposed by Philip Amster*

ASHENDORF, HARRY  
Res. 1378 E. 49th St.  
Bus. Millinery, 15 W. 39th St.  
Married

BALTERMAN, Miss DORIS  
Res. 1196 Eastern Pkwy.  
*Proposed by Paul Levine*

BERKOWITZ, SAM  
Res. 641 Crown St.  
Bus. Shoes, 818 Nostrand Ave.  
Married  
*Proposed by Larry Perrin, Harry Munzer*

BLOCK, ABRAHAM  
Res. 1160 Eastern Pkwy.  
Bus. Luncheonette, 346 Utica Ave.  
Single  
*Proposed by Dr. Harry I. Samuels*

CASPER, HARRY  
Res. 770 Empire Blvd.  
Bus. Coats, 348 W. 36th St.  
Married  
*Proposed by Louis Rosenblatt, Abr. P. Puchkoff*

FEINBERG, LOUIS  
Res. 216 E. 91st St.  
Bus. Paints, 604 Rockaway Ave.  
Married  
*Proposed by Louis Rosenblatt, Abr. P. Puchkoff*

FELLMAN, B.  
Res. 1130 President St.  
Married

FINE, SAM  
Res. 148 E. 56th St.  
Bus. Sandwich Shop, 60 Fulton St.  
Married

FINKELSTEIN, HAROLD  
Res. 1297 E. 48th St.  
Bus. Smoked Fish, 3801 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy.  
Married  
*Proposed by Edw. Geroff, Sam Schoenfeld*

FINKELSTEIN, SAMUEL  
Res. 76-02—174th St.  
Bus. Blouses, 175 Glenmore Ave.  
Married  
*Proposed by Louis Rosenblatt*

FISHER, DAVID  
Res. 275 Linden Blvd.  
Bus. Trucking, Same  
Married  
*Proposed by Louis Rosenblatt*

GELLER, Miss ANNE  
Res. 752 Murray St., Elizabeth, N. J.  
Bus. Buyer, Elizabeth, N. J.  
*Proposed by Moe Albert*

KATCHER, MAYER  
Res. 287 Sullivan Pl.  
Bus. Candy, 131 W. 14th St.  
Married  
*Proposed by Emanuel Greenberg*

LONDON, HAROLD  
Res. 5318 Snyder Ave.  
Bus. Provisions, 69 Fulton St.  
Married

PITCHENIK, SOLOMON W.  
Res. 45 E. 56th St.  
Bus. Distillery, Elizabeth, N. J.  
Married  
*Proposed by Albert Joley*

POLLACK, BENJAMIN W.  
Res. 1441 Prospect Pl.  
Bus. Government, 90 Church St.  
Single  
*Proposed by Jacob Mines, Morris D. Wender*

POSNER, SOL  
Res. 269 Brooklyn Ave.  
Bus. Dresses, 550—7th Ave.  
Single

RETTINGER, DAVID H.  
Res. 1057 Eastern Pkwy.  
Bus. Raincoats, 37 Union Sq.  
Married  
*Proposed by Cantor Rubin Tucker*

ROSE, LESTER  
Res. 1035 Washington Ave.  
Bus. State Ins. Fund, 625 Madison Ave.  
Single  
*Proposed by Joseph Blumberg*

ROSENBLATT, HERMAN  
Res. 660 Hegeman Ave.  
Bus. Trimmings, 18 E. 16th St.  
Married  
*Proposed by Louis Rosenblatt*

ROSOF, AL  
Res. 299 Hinsdale St.  
Bus. Broadloom, 675 Rockaway Ave.  
Married  
*Proposed by Dr. Irv. L. Rosof, Murray Rosof*

RUTENBERG, MORRIS  
Res. 1555 Carroll St.  
Bus. Dresses, 1400 Broadway  
Married  
*Proposed by Murray J. Danciger*

SIRCUS, PHILIP  
Res. 704 E. 51st St.  
Bus. Buttons, 22 W. 32nd St.  
Married

TEMIN, Miss ARLINE  
Res. 129 E. 52nd St.  
*Proposed by Paul Levine*

WAGNER, MURRAY E.  
Res. 921 Washington Ave.  
Bus. Securities, 120 Broadway  
Married  
*Proposed by Meyer Rogoff*

WEISS, LOUIS  
Res. 474 Brooklyn Ave.  
Bus. Umbrellas, 260—5th Ave.  
Married  
*Proposed by M. Bob Epstein*

ZIMMERMAN, CHARLES  
Res. 285 Albany Ave.  
Bus. Electrical, 344 Bowery  
Married

ZOHN, DR. BENJAMIN  
Res. 1449 Union St.  
Married

The following have applied for reinstatement:

GOLDFARB, HARRY  
Res. 288 Crown St.  
Bus. Resort, Bethlehem, N. H.  
Married  
*Proposed by Joseph Goldberg, Isidor Fine*

PINCUS, LEO  
Res. 480 Montgomery St.  
Bus. Attorney, 26 Court St.  
Married  
*Proposed by Meyer Chizner*

RATNER, JACOB  
Res. 101 Lincoln Rd.  
Bus. Retired  
Widower

## Personal

Mrs. Ira L. Rosenson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Moses Ginsberg, was elected President of the First Hebrew Day Nursery and Neighborhood of Brooklyn. She was formally installed as President of the Nursery on March 15th. Dr. Levinth delivered the installation address.

## Center Thanked by Baron Rothschild

THIS letter was received by Dr. Levinthal in appreciation of the gift of the two Sifre Torah presented to the Jews of France by the Brooklyn Jewish Center:

"We are extremely grateful to you as well as to the trustees and the members of your congregation for the very generous gift of two Sifre Torah which you have made. We will send these as soon as possible to the President of the Consistoire of the Jews of France, who will allocate them to the synagogue or syna-

gogues mostly in need.

"May we say that your fine gesture is appreciated not only by us here, who have at heart the rebuilding of Jewry in France, but will also be an encouragement to our brothers in France, who will know that their American co-religionists are helping them to rise again.

"You are surely contributing to that rebirth and we are all deeply thankful to you.

BARON EDOUARD DE ROTHSCHILD"

## Judge Greenberg Again Heads United Jewish Appeal

THE Brooklyn campaign for the United Jewish Appeal will again be conducted under the leadership of Judge Emanuel Greenberg, President of the Center. The Jews of this country will be asked to contribute seventy-five million dollars, as against thirty million dollars last year. Of this sum the Jews of New York are expected to raise twenty million dollars. In 1944, the campaign in our Borough netted approximately a million and a half, an increase of about \$600,000 over the previous year. This year a proportionately larger sum is expected, because of the increased needs and the larger quota.

The campaign will provide funds for the Joint Distribution Committee, the United Palestine Appeal, the National Refugee Service and the Jewish Welfare Board.

It is estimated that a million and a half surviving Jews, exclusive of those living in Soviet Russia, will require help in the form of food, clothing and shelter. With the liberation of additional Jews from the clutches of Hitler's Germany, the problem of saving our surviving fellow-brothers becomes more and more acute. Despite the restrictions placed on immigration into Palestine by the British White Paper, it is expected that thousands of Jews will find a home in that country during the coming year. Money will be needed for rescue and relief for these new immigrants. New agricultural settlements will have to be established, and industry and trade will have to be developed to make the newcomers self-sustaining. A portion of the campaign

income is to be devoted to the needs of the refugees in this country. This year the campaign in New York will raise money for the National Jewish Welfare Board, thus obviating the necessity for a separate drive. The Jewish Welfare Board has been responsible for the religious and recreational activities among the men and women serving in our Armed Forces.

The Brooklyn Jewish Center will open its campaign with a dinner on Thursday evening, April 12th. The Committee is headed by Mr. Isidore Fine, with Messrs. Maurice Bernhardt and David Spiegel as co-chairmen.

### Sisterhood Theatre Party, Wednesday, April 25th

THE Annual Theatre Party, arranged by the Sisterhood of the Center, will be held on Wednesday evening, April 25th, at the Alvin Theatre.

The proceeds of the Theatre Party are to help the Sisterhood in its work.

The following officers in charge of the Theatre Party have been appointed by Mrs. Isador Lowenfeld, President of the Sisterhood: Mrs. Maurice Bernhardt (SL 6-2135), Chairman; Mrs. Saul Abelov (SL 6-5736), Mrs. Isidor Fine (NE 8-9750) and Mrs. Kalman I. Ostow (SL 6-2842), Co-Chairmen; Mrs. Charles Safier (PR 2-0725), Secretary; and Mrs. Hyman Rachmil (NE 8-4864), Treasurer. Tickets may be secured from any one of the above.

### Best Wishes

WE extend our best wishes for a quick and complete recovery to Mr. Joseph Shapiro of 17 Ludlam Place.

## HONOR ROLL

The following is an additional list of Center members, children and grandchildren of Center members, serving with the United States armed forces. The list includes names received up to the time of going to press.

Finkelstein, Milton, S/Sgt.  
Finkelstein, Walter, F/Officer  
Gelber, Gabriel A., 1st Lt.  
Horwitz, Benjamin, Cpl.  
Koplick, Michael R., Lt. J.G.  
Kurshan, Daniel  
Lesser, Al, Pfc.  
Levy, Allan, Pvt.  
Lipp, Melvin D., Pfc.  
Rosen, Harold J., Pvt.  
Quittner, Howard, Lt.  
Quittner, Leonard  
Yeskel, Gilbert D., S 2/c



The following is a list of promotions in rank:

Gluckson, Albert, Sgt.  
Hurwitz, Irving, Major  
Jaffe, Albert S., Lt. J.G.  
Kramer, Nathaniel, T/Sgt.  
Levinthal, Lazar E., Sgt.  
Levy, Theodore, Pfc.  
Sorscher, Solomon, W.O.  
Stoloff, Bernard J., Sgt.  
Wender, Jerry, O.C.



# CENTER BULLETIN BOARD

## FORUM LECTURES

Conducted by THE BROOKLYN JEWISH CENTER

Monday Evenings at 8:30

Concluding Lectures of the Series on

### "MARRIAGE AND FAMILY PLANNING IN THE POST-WAR WORLD"

March 26th

8:30 P.M.

DR. JACOB A. GOLDBERG

Secretary, Social Hygiene Committee,  
N. Y. Tuberculosis and Health Association

"Juvenile Delinquency in the  
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Associate Rabbi, Free Synagogue,  
New York

"The Problems of Youth in  
War-Time"

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#### THE SISTERHOOD THEATRE PARTY

will be held at the

ALVIN THEATRE  
Wednesday Eve., April 25th

PRODUCTION

#### "The Firebrand of Florence"

Musical Comedy produced by Max  
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*"Beautiful to look at—it has the  
loveliest score since 'Oklahoma'."*

"The FIREBRAND OF FLORENCE"  
will be a **must** on your theatre list.  
Order your tickets immediately.

#### MEMBERSHIP SOCIAL MEETING

at the Center

Sunday Evening, April 1st

(Chol Hamoed Pesach)

AT 8:30 O'CLOCK

The program of entertainment will include

**Naomi Aleh-Leaf**

Famous Palestinian Dancer

**Miss Gloria Perkins**

Brilliant Young Violinist

Refreshments will be served

Center members and their wives are cordially  
invited to attend

#### PASSOVER PARTY and DANCE

of the

YOUNG FOLKS LEAGUE

Sunday, April 1st

From 2:30 to 6 P.M.

Refreshments will be served

## THE APOSTATE ZOLLI

[Continued from page 7]

as Jews. They not only harbored no hostility to their ancestral faith, but with very rare exceptions, as, for instance, Jacob Brafman, continued their attachment to their brethren and protected them in every way possible. Indeed, so deep and earnest was their devotion to their former faith and people that, like the Marranos of Spain, one would hardly call them apostates. An interesting example of such half-hearted conversion to the Greek Catholic Church was the case of Professor Daniel Chwolson (1819-1910). Born in Vilna, and an outstanding talmudic scholar already in his youth, he later devoted himself to the study of oriental languages, in which he attained great distinction. Embracing Christianity, he was appointed professor at the St. Petersburg—now Leningrad—University, but never for a moment did he cease loving and caring for his people. Indeed, all his life was devoted to them. When the Jews were attacked he defended them; when the Talmud was maligned, he hurled back the charges; when the ritual blood accusations was made, he wrote learned books to refute them; when repressive measures were planned against his people, he did much to mitigate their severity. His home was a meeting-place for Jewish thinkers and scholars, and among his correspondents were rabbis of the fame and standing of Yitzhok Elhanan, of Kovno. Immersed in Jewish studies all his life, loving and loyal to his brethren to the very end, Professor Chwolson remained a sincere

son of his people, although, unfortunately, in Christian guise.

And so the story ends, a story such as only a Jew with the peculiar twist of his life and fate could tell. For the rabbi of Rome to become converted is not more exciting than the conversions of the other tragic figures strutting through the Jewish ghetto. Posterity will be the judge of his deed. We can permit ourselves neither to condemn nor to deprecate it.

## FESTIVAL OF LIBERATION

[Continued from page 4]

their faith in the ultimate emancipation from oppression and injustice.

The association of Passover with the spring festival is very appropriate. Spring, the time of liberation for nature, harmonizes very well with this celebration. Both the historical and seasonal significance of Passover symbolizes national freedom and its awakening to new life.

Today the memory of the exodus burns strongly in our minds. The commemoration of the day of deliverance has instilled in us a desire for self-dedication to the principle of freedom as the essential prerequisite of national growth. Today, as heretofore, we again turn to our historic Haggadah for inspiration and assurance that the Jews throughout the war-stricken world will be delivered from the Pharaohs of today and be enabled to live as a free people in a free, democratic world.

—LEO SHPALL

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## GREAT FESTIVAL—THE STORY OF PASSOVER

[Continued from page 14]

An observant Jew comes home from the synagogue on the first Eve of Passover. Most likely he has been away from his regular work since noon. He is physically and spiritually clean. He finds everything ready for him. His wine is in a decanter, ready to be poured into glasses for Kiddush. The four cups are symbolic of the four expressions of redemption. (The Mishna Pesachim ordains that each Jew must have his four cups of wine even if he is dependent on charity. The Rashbam—R. Samuel b. Meir, grandson of Rashi—in his commentary to Pesachim adds that a man must have four cups even if he borrows money or sells his clothes and is reduced to the status of a mendicant). The matzoth are on the table, also the six species of the *ke'ara* on a plate. They are the shank bone of the shoulder of lamb on the top, on the right-hand side, and the egg on the left-hand side, opposite the bone. The bone represents the Paschal lamb, the egg is explained by

some as representing the other sacrifices eaten before the Paschal lamb. The *maror*, or bitter herb, is on the right hand center, and the *charoseth*, or mixture of apple and spices, supposedly representing the mortar and bricks which the Israelites were preparing in Egypt, opposite the bitter herb. The *karpas*, a pungent vegetable like the celery or parsley, is at the right-hand side, and opposite to it some vinegar or salt water. The *karpas* was originally our hors d'oeuvre, and was served by the Ancient Greeks and Romans. Every male of the family must sit in a reclining position as a sign of freedom and independence. This custom was probably imported from the Persians.

The *aphikomen*, the piece of matzoh put aside at the beginning of the service, is eaten last. The word *aphikomen* means dessert in Greek. It was eaten to recall to mind the Paschal, which was eaten last.

It has been stated that the Seder is not

a religious performance. This is altogether wrong. Our forefathers clad themselves in a *kittel*, indicating how religious they considered the entire service to be. The ceremony generally lasts beyond midnight, and is generally followed by the chanting of *Sbir Hashirim*, the "Song of Songs."

On the second Eve of Passover we begin to count the *Omer*. In Temple days, there was quite a ceremony connected with this event.

Throughout the various passages of the Scriptures, Passover is connected with Spring, with new life. Therefore, the "Song of Songs," the greatest lyric of life and love, has been chosen to be read in public during the Sabbath of the Passover Week. It is an excellent conclusion to any story about Passover—

For, lo, the winter is past,  
The rain is over and gone.  
The flowers appear on the earth,  
The time of singing has come  
And the voice of the dove is heard  
in our land.

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